

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is requested.

Claims 21-6, and 8-17 remain in the application. Claim 7 has been canceled. All of the remaining claims have been amended to eliminate the numeric references. Numeric references are not required under U.S. patent law and are given no patentable weight. Accordingly, the elimination of numeric references is not a narrowing amendment and is not an amendment entered for purposes of patentability. Claim 1 has been amended to define the invention more precisely. Claims 3 and 5 have been amended to address rejections under 35 USC 112 second paragraph. Claims 4 and 8 have been amended into independent form.

The Examiner objected to the title as being insufficiently descriptive. A new title was required.

The original title has been amended in accordance with the requirement of the Examiner.

The Examiner “kindly requested” the applicant to place the figures on the sheet so that they may be viewed easily with the pages in a vertical orientation.

The figures have not been replaced or amended. Counsel is unaware of any requirement that prohibits the “landscape” orientation of figures on a drawing sheet. It is understood of counsel that the applicant is given considerable discretion as to the “portrait” or “landscape” orientation to ensure greatest clarity for a particular figure. The figures could be reoriented from the original “landscape” orientation to the “portrait” orientation only by reducing the size of the figures and the numbers, and thereby

obscuring some of the details. The Examiner is urged to contact applicant's attorney at the number below if this matter is believed to require further discussion.

The Examiner objected to the portion of the specification shown at page 9 line 1, in view of missing text.

The Examiner is correct. Paragraph 0045 has been amended to incorporate the word --at--.

The Examiner rejected claims 3 and 5 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. The Examiner identified specific aspects of these two claims that was consider to be unclear.

Claims 3 and 5 have been amended in accordance with the helpful suggestions of the Examiner.

Claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 11 and 12 were rejected in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,565,416 to Rudy et al. The Examiner stated that Rudy has "resiliently deformable locks 42, and resiliently deformable coupling pieces 40." To support this interpretation, the Examiner consider the cavities to extend to a midline defined by the opposite linking grooves 74 of the housing 30.

Counsel respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's interpretation of Rudy et al. as applied to original claim 1. The Rudy et al. reference has horizontally adjacent cavities and vertically adjacent cavities. Each cavity has two resiliently deflectable locks. However, neither the horizontally adjacent cavities nor the vertically adjacent cavities have any structure comparable to the originally claimed resiliently deformable coupling piece coupling said locks of the adjacent cavities. In particular, the vertically adjacent cavities of the Rudy et al. reference have no structures connecting the locks of

the vertically adjacent cavities. Arguably the resiliently deflectable locks 42 in horizontally adjacent cavities of the Rudy et al. reference are coupled by the small section between the adjacent locks 42. However, the bases of those cantilevered locks 42 are not “resiliently deformable as specified in claim 1. Claim 1 has been amended to clarify the position and function of the originally claimed resiliently deformable coupling pieces. In particular, the resiliently deformable coupling pieces are defined as “extending through the cut away portion in the lateral wall.” It is submitted that the Rudy et al. reference has no suggestion of the structure defined by amended claim 1 or its dependent claims.

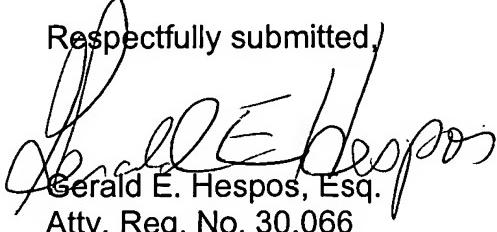
The applicants are pleased to note that the Examiner identified claims 4 and 8-10 as being directed to patentable subject matter. Claim 4 had depended directly from claim 1 and has been rewritten in independent form with all of the limitations of original claim 1. Accordingly, amended claim 4 is believed to be in condition for allowance. Claim 5 depends from claim 4 and should be allowed as well.

Allowable claim 8 had depended from claim 7 which in turn had depended from claim 1. Claim 8 has been amended into independent form including all the limitations of claims 1 and 7. Hence, amended claim 8 is believed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 9 and 10 depend from claim 8 and should be allowed as well.

The applicants are pleased to note that original claims 13-17 were allowed as filed. These claims remain in the application and have been amended only by eliminating the reference numerals.

In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, it is submitted that all the claims remaining in the application are directed to patentable subject matter, and allowance is solicited. The Examiner is urged to contact applicant's attorney at the number below to expedite the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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